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Advice as to the placing at public or
private sale of art works of all kinds, pic-
tures, sculptures, furniture, bibelots, etc.,
will be given at the office of the AMERICAN
ART NEWS, and also counsel as to the value
of art works and the obtaining of the best
"expert" opinion on the same. For these
services a nominal fee will be charged. Per-
sons having art works and desirous of dis-
posing or obtaining an idea of their value
will find our service on these lines a saving
of time, and, in many instances, of unneces-
sary expense. It is guaranteed that any
opinion given will be so given without re-
gard to personal or commercial motives.

BUREAU OF APPRAISAL.

We are so frequently called upon to pass
upon the value of art works for collectors
and estates, for the purpose of insurance,
sale, or, more especially, to determine
whether prior appraisals made to fix the
amount due under the inheritance or death
taxes are just and correct ones—and so
often find that such former appraisals have
been made by persons not qualified by ex-
perience or knowledge of art quality or
market values, with resultant deception and
often overpayments of taxes, etc.—that we
suggest to all collectors and executors the
advisability of consulting our Bureau of Ap-
praisal either in the first place or for re-
vision of other appraisals. This Bureau is
conducted by persons in every way qualified
by experience and study of art works for
many years, and especially of market val-
ues, both here and abroad; our appraisals
are made without regard to anything but
quality and values, and our charges are
moderate—our chief desire being to save
our patrons and the public from ignorant
needless and costly appraisal expenditure.

PROTECT VENICE ART.

Art treasures in Venice have been covered
with wood, concrete and steel to protect
them from destruction if the city is bom-
barded from sea or sky, says a recently re-
turned visitor.

The lions of St. Mark are thus shielded
from attack, he said, and paintings which,
because of their antiquity might be de-
stroyed by concussions, have been padded
and incased in iron boxes.

EDUCATION IN ATTRIBUTION.

The educational value of attributions
by authorities, in that they frequently
bring out information regarding Old
Masters and long dead artists, or his-
torical details of value, is well proven
in the discussion, now under way be-
tween Mr. Lionel Cust, the accom-
plished English art critic and author-
ity, and an editor of the Burlington
Magazine, of London, and Mr. Charles
Henry Hart, the eminent American au-
thority on early American art and ar-
tists, over the attribution by Mr. Cust
to Gilbert Stuart of a portrait of Wil-
liam Harwood, reproduced in the Sep-
tember Burlington and on our front
page this week.

Through Mr. Cust's attribution of
this work to Stuart, Mr. Hart throws
an interesting light on the career and
work of the almost forgotten and yet
strong early American painter, Mather
Brown, some of whose portraits are
undoubtedly figuring as Stuarts in
English and American collections to-
day.

The progress of the discussion as to
the authorship of this strong portrait
will be watched with keen interest by
connoisseurs in both England and
America.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE WORSHIP OF UGLINESS.

Under this heading, the N. Y. Times
recently published an interesting letter from
Carroll Beckwith, in which the veteran artist
says in part—

"A published letter from L. Govett calls
attention to the neglect of our art schools
in not emphasizing in their curriculum that
branch of art cultivation embraced in
aesthetics. His criticism seems to me both
timely and just. For several years past it
has been borne in upon me that the gradu-
ates from our best art schools were seri-
ously lacking in those higher moral and
intellectual qualities, the development of
which should have been as carefully nur-
tured as the technical facility of the hand
and the eye.

"Authoritative guidance is unquestionably
lacking in all of our art schools. The dig-
nity of the Royal Academy, and the high
respect in which the Directors of the Ecole
Nationale des Beaux-Arts are held, has a
restraining influence upon the student,
which saves him from being led astray into
the hopeless paths of so-called 'Modernism'
or 'Art Nouveau' that have shipwrecked
so many men of talent. In view of the per-
nicious and monstrous developments, or
rather perversions, which the misguided
schools of painting and sculpture have un-
dergone in recent years, it would seem to
me right at this moment that our serious
art schools, such as those of our Academy
of Design and Art Students' League, should
establish courses of aesthetics which the
students in all the departments should be
required to attend. In other words, classes
where good and bad taste should be dem-
onstrated, where beauty and grace should
be defined, in contradistinction to the ugly.
In past years art students were required to
study the antique. Insensibly they ab-
sorbed from the contemplation of the Greek
a sense of proportion that was beautiful,
of refinement, of grace which became a part
of their artistic equipment, and uncon-
sciously their works were always tinged
by the great art of the past.

"I am aware that this recommendation
will not meet with the welcome of the
present-day art student. He wishes his
freedom from the 'academic,' to paint the
thing as he sees it; and as he realizes that
to 'épater' the public is one of the short
roads to prominence, he selects an instruc-
tor who does not require much drawing
and teaches that to be strong is to be
brutal."

After quoting at length from a recent
discourse by Leon Bonnat, published in the
Paris La Renaissance to the general effect
that "only by the study of form and the
purity of drawing, humanity has been en-
riched by countless chef d'oeuvres," Mr.
Beckwith concludes as follows—

"I cannot disassociate in my own mind
the monstrous aberration of Germany in
the present war with this awful develop-
ment in my own profession. Some two
years ago, in a picture dealer's shop in
Paris, Vollard by name, I was horrified to
find the entire collection composed of the
most extreme works of the Cubists, Fu-
turists, Pointillists, and all the insane
schools of mental maniacs. I remarked to
the dealer my horror and asked if he ever
sold them. Raising his shoulders he re-
plied, 'I take three carloads of them to
Germany every Spring and Fall and sell
every one.'"

Why Are Pictures "Great?"

August 30, 1915.

Editor AMERICAN ART NEWS,

Dear Sir:

Many years ago I became interested in
oil painting. Certain pictures attracted and
held me—others made no impression. Often
those that interested, appeared no better
technically, than those that did not. I
asked myself, Why was this? Living in a
remote section, away from art centers, I
naturally turned to books. I read them
faithfully, with a real earnest desire to
learn. But I found out little or nothing.
About the only value most of the books
had, lay in the illustrations. Why are Corot's,
or Rembrandt's or Inness' pictures great?
What is in them that makes them master-
pieces? If there is a book that tells you this,
I have not found it. Descriptions of the
pictures, more or less good as literature,
technical terms about light, shadow, color,
lines, etc., tell you nothing about the funda-
mental thing, without which there is noth-
ing. The very thing I wanted to know was
not said. I wanted to know, not about
color, or light, or drawing; I wanted to
know why it was that these things used in
a certain way were art, and not used in
that way were rubbish. What was the dif-
ference, what was it made it art? Well I
did not find out.

Later I talked with persons who knew
about pictures, and not but little further.
There was plenty of talk but not much
light. It was a mystery to me, for I know
they were able to judge that they knew
the true from the false. One said it was
inspiration, another that it was imagina-
tion, another that it was emotion. This did
not help much. The picture was there on
the easel, a thing alive; glowing with
beauty; we felt its mastery, but we could
not tell it.

Is it meant to be told? In the great
scheme of things, is it intended that words
should spell out the secret? Is there not
another language, which cannot be printed,
and is not that the reason it has not been
printed? It seems to me this must be true.
Is not the soul of art, translated to the
printed page, much like the soul of music
when it is transferred to the scroll? It is
not there. Only signs and figures are there,
not music, not art. It is untranslatable.
One art may serve another art but it can-
not convey it.

And so we come to the bottom of it. No
one can describe a song so as to make you
hear it, to realize it, to feel it; no one can
put in prose the poet's words without losing
the magic; no one can tell you about, or
describe a picture, without leaving out the
very thing that makes it a picture.

And as no one can tell you why it is that
a melody of Chopin is wonderful, however
much they may talk about it, and say this
and that, so no one can tell you why Corot's
or Inness' pictures are wonderful. It is not
explained or told, by saying it is because
they are beautiful, or because they inspire
emotion or stir the imagination. These
things are only results, not the cause.

And so I have come to the very unsat-
isfactory conclusion that the only way to
learn pictures is to study the pictures them-
selves; that they speak their own language,
and there is no other; that one person can-
not hand it on to another; that all one
ever gets from a picture, as from a poem
or other work of art, is the result, the ef-
fect of it; that as to the original cause, the
thing that gives it life eternal and makes
it glorious, it is no more definable or get-
table than Divinity itself, of which I some-
times think it partakes. The man who
created it can no more tell you what it is
than the mother can describe the spirit of
the being she has brought into the world.

Art can never be defined; words cannot
tell what it is. All we know is, that it is a
something that charms and delights those
who have eyes to see it, and hearts to re-
ceive it.

Very truly yours,

S. L. Kingan.

Tucson, Ariz., Sept. 30, 1915.

Copley Not a Pupil of West.

Editor AMERICAN ART NEWS:

Dear Sir: I notice in the October Bur-
lington Magazine the statement in a signed
article by Lionel Cast that "Copley was a
pupil of West." This is incorrect. Copley
was in no sense a pupil of West, as Stuart,

Trumbull, Morse, Leslie and Sully certainly
were. West sought to "sponsor" Copley's
entrance to the R. A. exhibitions, but in
this matter he moved only after Sir Joshua
Reynolds himself. Before he ever saw
West, and it was in London that he first
saw him, Copley had to his credit a series
of portraits painted in Boston which placed
him in a position to teach rather than to
receive instruction from Benjamin West.
West himself testified to his countryman's
genius by recommending Copley to the
King and Queen as the painter qualified to
paint the Royal Princesses. The group exe-
cuted by Copley has been one of the art
treasures of Buckingham Palace for more
than a century.

Respectfully yours,

James Britton.

N. Y., Oct. 7, 1915.

ART TREASURES IN DEMAND.

"It has been noticed of late as a curious
sequel to the war and its economic effects,"
says a Paris correspondent of the London
Morning Post, "that the price of Old
Masters and valuable works of art has been
rising. Moreover business from the deal-
ers' point of view as regards obtaining im-
portant pieces for sale has been exception-
ally difficult. One might almost conclude
from the reluctance evinced by owners to
part with their art treasures, and from the
high prices they fetch, that there is a great
deal more idle money lying about than
would be supposed from the outward aspect
of the financial markets. Once or twice re-
cently I have dropped in at the Hotel
Drouot to see what was doing in the pub-
lic auction rooms. I have found that the
sales, although considerably reduced in vol-
ume, are very well attended, and, most
surprising of all, one saw the smaller fry
among the professional dealers actively bid-
ding for lots of quite inferior interest well
up to their full value.

"The causes of these apparent paradoxes
are somewhat complex. On the one hand,
regarding the higher classes of works of
art, I have had the privilege of receiving
the personal experience and views of Mr.
J. P. Labbey, one of the leading New York
dealers, who is just completing a some-
what disappointing buying trip in Europe.
The opinion in America, he said, was quite
unshakable that one had only to come over
to Europe with some hundred thousand
dollars in cash to be able to buy anything
conceivable, up to the Venus de Milo, at a
thief's bargain. The actual facts Mr. Labbey
has found to be very much the contrary.
Even professional dealers are not the least
inclined to liquidate their stocks for any-
thing but fully conventional trade profits.
To cite a specific case. There was one
particular picture coming up for sale that
Mr. Labbey had marked down as his. He
was prepared to go to £2,500 for it, which
he considered a high bid even in normal
times. It fetched over £3,000. He cabled
for instructions, and next day approached
the purchaser with an offer of 10 per cent.
higher, which was laughed at. America it-
self, he asserts, even with its present trade
boom, is not yet prepared to pay the prices
for pictures Europe is paying today, al-
though the contrary is usually the case.
Private owners of valuable things in Eng-
land or France do not appear to evince
the smallest desire for converting their
treasures into ready cash. Among the rea-
sons for this in the first place is that French
art dealers are almost always possessed of
ample capital, and are by no means forced
to turn over their money rapidly, and of
course there is the fact that over here we
are not personally so hard pressed for ready
cash as some would like to make out.

"These reasons, however, do not explain
the willingness to sink money in purchas-
ing works of art, even at high prices. I
have found other suggestions, the most sig-
nificant of which is that many people with
idle capital are endeavoring to ambush it
in the tangible form but intangible value
of, say, pictures which, while being stand-
ard commodities in the markets of art,
would escape, as they think, any compulsory
action by governments in borrowing capital
for the purposes of war loans. This rea-
son seems to go deeper into the heart of
things than any of the others.

OBITUARY.

Kaspar von Zumbusch.

Kaspar von Zumbusch, the famous
Viennese sculptor, died in late September
at the age of 85. He was the author of
the Maria Theresa memorial and other
monuments and statues.

Oglesby Paul.

Oglesby Paul, a Phila. landscape archi-
tect of Fairmount Park, who arranged many
large estates in the suburbs of that city,
died in Boston Tuesday. He was born
in 1877.

Marie Bell Gurnee.

Marie Bell Gurnee, a painter in water-
color and decorator of china, died in Brook-
lyn on Tuesday aged 37.